WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An external light source-employing scanner comprising:

a scanner screen holder; and

a scanner screen having:

a rear layer of translucent plastic;

an array of photodetector/shield units having light-passing slots between neighboring photodetector/photoshield units such that light rays from an external source pass through a given slot in the array, impinge upon an object, reflect from said object to a photodetector and converted to data signals;

a platen layer of translucent plastic; and

a lid layer of plastic that defines an object holding space between the platen layer and the lid layer.

2. The scanner of claim 1 wherein a shield component of a photodetector/shield unit has a channel configuration in which a photodetector resides.

3. The scanner of claim 1 further comprising a processor wherein said processor is external to said scanner.

4. The scanner of claim 1 wherein a CRT is employed as an external light source and is electrically connected to a computer that is electrically connected to the scanner screen.

5. The scanner of claim 1 further comprising a lens device for concentrating light from said external light source onto said object.

6. The scanner of claim 1 that further comprises a fourth layer of plastic material is capable of passing light rays and also capable of passing electrical signals.

7. The scanner of claim 1 that further comprises a layer made of Mylar® having an electrical circuit on its surface and wherein said electrical circuit is made of a transparent conducting material.

8. The scanner of claim 1 further comprising electrical circuitry for adjusting said light source to provide a desired light color.

9. The scanner of claim 1 further comprising electrical circuitry for generating a plurality of color spectral components with said light source.

10. The scanner of claim 1 wherein a CRT associated with the scanner screen provides a menu screen.

11. The scanner of claim 1 wherein the lid layer is hingedly attached to the scanner screen.

12. The scanner of claim 1 wherein the scanner screen further comprises a mechanical connector for securing said screen to a computer monitor.

13. The scanner of claim 1 wherein the scanner screen is connected to the scanner screen holder by a hinge mechanism.

14. The scanner of claim 1 wherein said scanner screen has a flat surface.

15. The scanner of claim 1 wherein said scanner screen has a curved surface.

16. The scanner of claim 1 wherein the scanner screen holder positions the scanner screen in a vertical position in front of a CRT.

17. The scanner of claim 1 wherein the scanner screen holder has channels in which a roller wheel can turn and thereby guide the scanner screen into and out of the scanner screen holder.

18. The scanner of claim 1 wherein the scanner screen has a slot that serves to hold a sheet of paper in a vertical orientation in front of a CRT.

19. The scanner of claim 1 wherein the rear layer, platen layer and lid layer are all made of rigid plastic materials.

20. The scanner of claim 1 wherein the rear layer, platen layer and lid layer are all made of a flexible plastic material.